

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

In the Claims:

Claims 1-47. (Cancelled).

48. (Currently Amended) A gaming apparatus, comprising:

- a display unit that is capable of generating video images;
- a value input device;
- a controller operatively coupled to said display unit and said value input device, said controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor;
- said controller being programmed to allow a person to make a wager;
- said controller being programmed to cause a video image to be generated on said display unit, said video image representing a video slots game,
- said video image comprising an image of a plurality of simulated slot machine reels,
- said slot machine reels comprising a plurality of display regions;
- said controller being programmed to display a symbol in the plurality of display regions;
- said controller being programmed to determine whether there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous and that relate to an aspect of the bonus game;
- said controller being programmed to allow a player to operate a second input device to play an aspect of a bonus game in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if said controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous and that relate to the aspect of the bonus game;
- said controller being programmed to allow the player to use manual dexterity on the second input device to effect the outcome of the bonus game; and

said controller being programmed to determine a value payout associated with an outcome of said game and said bonus game.

49. (Previously Presented) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein said controller is programmed to allow the player to operate the second input device to adjust the direction of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if the controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

50. (Previously Presented) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein said controller is programmed to allow the player to operate the second input device to adjust the speed of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if the controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

51. (Previously Presented) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein said controller is programmed to allow the player to operate the second input device to adjust the spin of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if the controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

52. (Previously Presented) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein said controller is programmed to allow the player to operate the second input device to adjust the direction, speed and spin of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if the controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

53. (Previously Presented) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein said second input device comprises a trackball.

54. (Previously Presented) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein said second input device comprises a joystick.

55. (Previously Presented) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein said second input device comprises a light pen.

56. (Previously Presented) A gaming system comprising a plurality of gaming apparatuses as defined in claim 48; said gaming apparatuses being interconnected to form a network of gaming apparatuses.

57. (Previously Presented) A gaming system as defined in claim 56, wherein said gaming apparatuses are interconnected via the Internet.

58. (Currently Amended) A gaming method comprising:

causing a video game image to be generated of a video slots games wherein said video game image comprises an image of a plurality of simulated slot machine reels and wherein said slot machine reels comprises a plurality of display regions;

displaying a symbol in the plurality of display regions;

determining whether there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous and that relate to an aspect of the bonus game;

allowing a player to operate a second input device to play an aspect of a bonus game in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if said controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous and that relate to the aspect of the bonus game;

allowing the player to use manual dexterity on the second input device to effect the outcome of the bonus game if said controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous; and

determining a value payout associated with an outcome of said game and said bonus game.

59. (Previously Presented) A gaming method as defined in claim 58,

additionally comprising allowing the player to operate the second input device to adjust the direction of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if the controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

60. (Previously Presented) A gaming method as defined in claim 58, additionally comprising allowing the player to operate the second input device to adjust the speed of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if the controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

61. (Previously Presented) A gaming method as defined in claim 58, additionally comprising allowing the player to operate the second input device to adjust the spin of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if the controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

62. (Previously Presented) A gaming method as defined in claim 58, additionally comprising allowing the player to operate the second input device to adjust the direction, speed and spin of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if the controller determines that there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

63. (Previously Presented) A gaming method as defined in claim 58, additionally comprising allowing the player to operate a trackball as the second input device.

64. (Previously Presented) A gaming method as defined in claim 58, additionally comprising allowing the player to operate a joystick as the second input device.

65. (Previously Presented) A gaming method as defined in claim 58, additionally comprising allowing the player to operate a lightpen as the second input device.

66. (Currently Amended) A memory having a computer program stored therein, said computer program being capable of being used in connection with a gaming apparatus, said memory comprising:

a first memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to allow a person to make a wager;

a second memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to cause a video image to be generated on a display unit, said video image representing a video slots game wherein said video image comprises an image of a plurality of simulated slot machine reels and wherein said slot machine reels comprises a plurality of display regions;

a third memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to display a symbol in the plurality of display regions;

a fourth memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to determine whether there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous and that relate to an aspect of the bonus game;

a fifth memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to allow a player to operate a second input device to play an aspect of a bonus game in the display regions that display the at least

three related symbols if there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous and that relate to the aspect of the bonus game;

a sixth memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to allow a player to use manual dexterity on the second input device to effect the outcome of the bonus game if there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous; and

a seventh memory portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to determine a value payout associated with an outcome of said game and said bonus game.

67. (Previously Presented) A memory as defined in claim 66, wherein said memory additionally comprises a additional portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to allow the player to operate the second input device to adjust the direction of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

68. (Previously Presented) A memory as defined in claim 66, wherein said memory additionally comprises a additional portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to adjust the speed of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

69. (Previously Presented) A memory as defined in claim 66, wherein said memory additionally comprises a additional portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to adjust the spin of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

70. (Previously Presented) A memory as defined in claim 66, wherein said memory additionally comprises a additional portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to adjust the direction, speed and spin of an object displayed as moving in the display regions that display the at least three related symbols if there are at least three related symbols in display regions that are contiguous.

71. (Previously Presented) A memory as defined in claim 66, wherein said memory additionally comprises a additional portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to allow the player to operate a trackball as the second input device.

72. (Previously Presented) A memory as defined in claim 66, wherein said memory additionally comprises a additional portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would cause the gaming apparatus to allow the player to operate a joystick as the second input device.

73. (Previously Presented) A memory as defined in claim 66, wherein said memory additionally comprises a additional portion physically configured in accordance with computer program instructions that would allow the player to operate a lightpen as the second input device.

74. (New) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein the bonus game comprises a plurality of aspects, wherein each combination of at least three related symbols relates to one of the plurality of aspects.

75. (New) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein the at least three related symbols depict an aspect of the bonus game.

76. (New) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 48, wherein the at least three related symbols relate to an aspect of a bowling game.

77. (New) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 58, wherein the bonus game comprises a plurality of aspects, wherein each combination of at least three related symbols relates to one of the plurality of aspects.

78. (New) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 58, wherein the at least three related symbols depict an aspect of the bonus game.

79. (New) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 58, wherein the at least three related symbols relate to an aspect of a bowling game.

80. (New) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 66, wherein the bonus game comprises a plurality of aspects, wherein each combination of at least three related symbols relates to one of the plurality of aspects.

81. (New) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 66, wherein the at least three related symbols depict an aspect of the bonus game.

82. (New) A gaming apparatus as defined in claim 66, wherein the at least three related symbols relate to an aspect of a bowling game.